

**MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON
ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS**

Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, May 19, 2009

Time: 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Place: Howard County Government Gateway Building
6751 Columbia Gateway Drive
Columbia, Maryland

Present: Chair Jane Nishida, Anis Ahmed, Shukoor Ahmed, Katherine Chin,
Elizabeth Chung, Dr. Suresh Gupta, Dr. Martin Ma, Tammy Pantages,
Lily Qi, Sovan Tun, Kui Zhao

Absent: Vice Chair Bruce Lee, Kwang Choi, George Dang, Dr. Kamala Edwards,
Maria Hrabinski, David Pak, Shailesh Patel, Dr. Amjad Riar, Dr. Nayan
Shah, Beth Wong

Staff Present: David Lee, Agnes M. Smith

Guest Speakers:
Raj Kudchadkar, Deputy Director, Howard County BRAC Office

I. Welcoming Remarks

Chair Jane Nishida called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m. Chair Nishida informed the Commission that this is a working session meeting. The Commission will review the work plan and look at what has been accomplished. Chair Nishida told the Commission that they will be reviewing, revising and updating the work plan.

Chair Nishida also noted that one of the goals in the 2007 Annual Report was to promote the 2010 Census. She informed the Commission that they will discuss how this will be implemented.

II. Work Plan Review

Full Commission

Chair Nishida noted that most of the short term goals have been accomplished. However, the long term goals need more work and the New Americans Council should be added. The long term goals consist of developing State Stat indicators to measure the effectiveness of outreach and engagement with APA community; study state government's current language access policy and identify additional government funding sources and community organizations to increase language access services for communities with limited English proficiency; review legislative and executive policies/programs affecting APA and immigrant communities and make recommendations; and identify opportunities to partner with the Governor's Commission on

Hispanic Affairs and Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs on issues of mutual interest and concern.

Workforce Development

It was noted that there needs to be a better system for collection of data. There are 611 APA's in the State workforce which is a little over 1%. The State's APA population is a little over 5%.

Chair Nishida said the Committee needs to find out where the APA's are. Do they work in one agency more than others?

Commissioner Elizabeth Chung stated that cultural competency training is needed in the workforce.

Commissioner Lily Qi said that if a supervisor has a problem with you taking a four week vacation because you are visiting family overseas, that is a cultural problem.

There needs to be a better job of accessing the APA's in the State workforce. Find out about activities, breakdown of APA's by department, cultural competency programs, what professions are they in, etc.

Commissioner Anis Ahmed asked how can one find out the breakdown of ethnic origin in healthcare. Commissioner Suresh Gupta that the Board of Physicians and the Board of Nurses would have that information.

Chair Nishida asked the Committee to focus on two professions and get the ethnic origin and where they are. She also asked to have someone from the Board of Physicians to testify at a future meeting.

Commissioner Chung said that the Committee needs to evaluate how to help APA's with the certification process for professional certifications, even plumbing, electrical, etc.

Chair suggested that the Commission look at training programs in the private sector for health care to use as a model and next year move on to another profession.

Commissioner Qi asked Committee members to do some research in their counties to see the outreach to APA's.

Commissioner Ahmed informed the Commission of the different workforce groups in Montgomery County such as the South East Asian Association, APA Employee Association, etc.

Commissioner Kui Zhao suggested that the Commission look at the federal government workforce.

Chair Nishida noted that the Commission should first focus efforts on the State workforce. We want to broaden the interest. Last year was a fact finding year. This year we need to be more active. Use this as a model and then we can broaden the focus. She also noted that there were three available appointments. She asked the Commission to think about candidates for these appointments.

Economic Development

Commissioner Martin Ma noted that the Committee wants to promote Maryland to the Asian business community. Proposed a meeting with the secretary of DBED and Governor to introduce and facilitate the dialog between APA businesses about trade opportunities. Have a foreign trade zone to attract businesses to Maryland.

Chair Nishida told the Committee to set up a meeting with DBED, Maryland Port Authority and the airport with the broad goal to promote Maryland as an investment destination for businesses. She also asked them to facilitate/find out where the State has trade zones.

Commissioner Ahmed said that Prince George's County has trade zones and the State could partner with them.

Chair Nishida noted that the focus should be on State business programs but the Commission should also look at county programs.

It was noted that the Commission should look at expanding MBE opportunities for small businesses.

Commissioner Shukoor Ahmed said he can help small businesses with the certification process. He will find out more information on obtaining contracts for small businesses. He could also be the contact person for small businesses.

Executive Director David Lee informed the Commission that small businesses like the mom and pop stores, grocery stores, dry cleaners, etc. are different than small businesses seeking state contracts. One of the issues with small businesses getting certifications, licenses, etc. is the language barrier. He noted that Maryland has a small business assistance office and that the Commission needs to see what they do.

Chair Nishida said that the New Americans Council is taking up the issues with helping new immigrants with business needs. We can share this information with the community. She wanted the Commission to focus on two things:

1. Expanding MBE opportunities through the new stimulus package
2. NAC educating new immigrants and making sure it is Asian friendly

Executive Director asked the Commission if they would like to continue the APA Business Conference. The Commission unanimously agreed to continue.

Social Services

Commissioner Elizabeth Chung said she would like to see a statewide agenda for health. Would like to see what Montgomery County is doing and help other jurisdictions.

Chair Nishida suggested that the Commission do an assessment of the Asian health needs statewide. Ask Montgomery County directors what we can do statewide. Use Montgomery County as a model in order to develop APA health agenda.

Commissioner Anis Ahmed noted that Montgomery County contains almost half of the State's Asian population. Also, Montgomery will be having their health conference tomorrow. Montgomery County received some of their funds from tobacco companies.

Commissioner Chung suggested that the leadership from the Commission needs to partner with Montgomery County to share with other counties.

Chair Nishida asked the Commission if they thought data was needed to present to Secretary Colmers to show what Montgomery is doing.

Executive Director Lee suggested using data from the Asian Health Initiative.

Commissioner Qi noted that the needs assessment from Montgomery County is a great backdrop. She also asked why is there such a gap in other counties.

Commissioner Ma informed the Commission that \$20 billion for health reform education for minorities is available through the federal government.

Chair Nishida said that the Commission needs to take advantage of Commissioner Ma's connection to White House Education Program for health services.

Chair Nishida asked Commissioner Ma to find out how the funds can be accessed.

Commissioner Kitty Chin suggested that Senator Mikulski be approached since she has a strong health care agenda.

Commissioner Suresh Gupta was asked if he knew about healthcare reform policy. He noted that he practices medicine and is not involved with policy. He is involved in healthcare reform in reference to medical malpractice.

Commissioner Sovan Tun said not to expect the State to do assessment study. He also suggested that a survey be done on what other counties have.

Chair Nishida asked the Committee to do an assessment in the service gap both state and private; get information about the White House Education program using the stimulus package; and check any connections with the New Americans Council.

Community Development

Commissioner A. Ahmed noted that communities are being visited and there is an agreement with the Census Bureau. Also if any organization registered with the Census works with them in partnership, they can receive \$1,500.

Chair Nishida told the Commission that we need to be proactive. Send out flyers to organizations with contact information in writing. One of the challenges is to link them to our community. Also this information needs to go on the website.

Executive Director Lee noted that this information is already on the website. Also, the Maryland Department of Planning, Governor's Office of Community Initiatives and the Secretary of State's Office are leading the State Census Outreach effort.

Chair Nishida would like to find ways to leverage the community in the Census outreach.

Commissioner Qi said that the National Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund volunteers went to the polls to see how Asians vote. They are coming to Montgomery on June

11. They will be reporting their findings on Asian voting patterns. They want to partner with Commission. Will be traveling from New York to make presentation.

III. Approval of March Minutes

Commissioner A. Ahmed moved for approval of the March 31, 2009 Minutes. Commissioner Ma seconded the motion.

March 31, 2009 minutes were unanimously approved by the Commission.

IV. New Business

Draft annual report will include 2009 Work Plan.

The next Commission meeting will be on July 21, 2009 in Frederick County. The focus will be on health. Have health boards come and talk about certification process, how many APA physicians, license process, etc.

Chair Nishida thanked Raj Kudchadkar, Deputy Director, Howard County BRAC Office. She thanked Commissioners and noted this was a productive meeting. She is looking forward to a productive year.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m.